

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EUR-10 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 L-02 DODE-00 IO-03 AID-10

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R 090942 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2928

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 10315

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI VS

SUBJECT: DAILY MR-3 SITREP- 8 JUNE 1973

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON FROM BIEN HOA JUNE 8
REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE BIEN HOA 0179

1. MILITARY ACTIVITY IN MR 3 WAS UP CONSIDERABLY FROM YESTERDAY DURING THE 24 HOURS ENDING 0800 JUNE 8. THERE WERE 33 SEPARATE INCIDENTS REPORTED, CONSISTING OF 14 ATTACKS BY FIRE AND 13 GROUND CONTACTS, NINE OF WHICH OCCURRED ALONG NATIONAL HIGHWAY 13 BETWEEN LAI KHE BASE IN BINH DUONG PROVINCE AND AN LOC CITY IN BINH LONG PROVINCE BECAUSE ARVN IS ATTEMPTING TO OPEN THE HIGHWAY. IN ADDITION, THERE WERE FIVE MINE/ BOOBY TRAP INCIDENTS AND ONE SNIPER ATTACK. CASUALTIES FOR THE DAY WERE SIX FRIENDLY KILLED AND 37 WOUNDED INCLUDING THREE CIVILIANS, WHILE KNOWN VC/ NVA LOSSES WERE 16 KILLED AND FOUR CAPTURED. SEPTTEL ON HIGHWAY 13 OPERATION FOLLOWS. TONLE CHAM RANGER BASE CAMP TOOK 41 ROUNDS OF MIXED ARTILLERY AND NUMBER OF B-40 GRENADES FIRED AT CLOSE RANGE WITH NO CASUALTIES. LOUDSPEAKERS WARNED THE RANGERS THAT THE CAMP WOULD BE OVERRUN ON JUNE 8 UNLESS THEY CEASED CALLING
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IN AIR AND ARTILLERY STRIKES ON QTE LIBERATED UNQTE AREAS. THERE WERE ALSO THREE SHARP GROUND ACTIONS IN HAU NGHIA PROVINCE IN TRANG BANG, DUC HUE AND DUC HOA DISTRICTS IN WHICH THE REGIONAL FORCE UNITS IN THE PROVINCE KILLED ELEVEN VC/ NVA AND CAPTURED FOUR OTHERS PLUS SOME SMALL ARMS. MOVEMENT OF A BATTALION OF THE NVA 165 TH REGIMENT OF THE 7 TH DIVISION INTO NORTHERN TAN UYEN DISTRICT OF BIEN HOA PROVINCE JUST SOUTH OF PHU GIAO DISTRICT IN BINH DUONG PROVINCE HAS BEEN CONFIRMED. LAST NIGHT 155 MM CORPS ARTILLERY AND AIRSTRIKES WERE PUT ON KNOWN NVA LOCATIONS NEAR XT860320.

2. BG LE MINH DAO, ARVN 18 TH DIVISION CG, TOLD THE CONGEN YES-TERDAY THAT HE EXPECTS THE NVA/ VC TO ATTACK WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, BUT THAT HE IS NOT SURE WHERE. AS A PRECAUTION, AND TO HELP THE ARVN 5 TH DIVISION, DAO HAS BEEN GIVEN AN EXTENDED AREA OF OPERATION BY MR 3 CG LTG NGUYEN BAN MINH THAT GIVES DAO RESPONSIBILITY FOR MOST OF BINH DUONG PROVINCE EAST OF NATIONAL HIGHWAY 13. TO HANDLE THIS, DAO HAS DEPLOYED FOUR BATTALIONS: THREE TO PHU GIAO DISTRICT OF BINH DUONG PROVINCE, AND ONE TO TAN UYEN DISTRICT OF BIEN HOA PROVINCE (IN CASE THE NVA/ VC TRY TO OUTFLANK HIM IN PHU GIAO). HE HAS ALSO REINFORCED HIS BATTALION PROTECTING NATIONAL HIGHWAY 1 AROUND TRANG BOM VILLAGE OF DUC TU DISTRICT IN BIEN HOA PROVINCE, WHERE DESULTORY FIGHTING HAS BEEN TAKING PLACE ALL YEAR. HE NOW HAS ONLY ONE BATTALION LEFT ALONG INTERPROVINCIAL HIGHWAY 2 IN PHUOC TUY PROVINCE, AND HIS LATEST INTELLIGENCE IS THAT THE NVA IN THAT AREA HAVE THEIR SUPPLIES PREPOSITIONED FOR AN ATTACK THIS MONTH, EITHER ALONG HIGHWAY 2, WHICH THEY CONTROLLED FOR A YEAR BEFORE DAO PUSHED THEM OUT THIS FEBRUARY, OR ALONG NATIONAL HIGHWAY 15 AT THE BIEN HOA- PHUOC TUY PROVINCE BORDER, AN NVA/ VC COMMO- LIAISON ROUTE FOR YEARS. DAO SAYS THAT ALL ARVN, RF, AND PF ARE ON 100 PERCENT ALERT NOW, AND HE CLAIMS THAT THE MORALE OF HIS TROOPS IS GOOD. HE ALSO SAYS THAT EVEN IF THE NVA/ VC ATTACK, THE ATTACKS WILL NOT BE AS EXTENSIVE AS THE ATTACKS IN JANUARY. THE PROBLEM IS, HE ADDED, THAT THE ENEMY HAS LEARNED FROM THE JANUARY EXPERIENCE, AND THIS TIME WILL NOT ATTACK UNTIL THE VERY LAST MINUTE, WHICH WILL MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE ARVN TO DRIVE THEM OUT OF SOME AREAS IF THE GVN DECIDES TO ABIDE BY THE NEW AGREEMENT.

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EM COMMENT: OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT THE ARVN 18 TH DIVISION, NEVER A GOOD DIVISION, IS NOW STRETCHED QUITE THIN, AND THAT DAO IS RIGHT ABOUT THE POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES. IF, HOWEVER, THE NVA DO RETAKE HIGHWAY 2, OR CUT HIGHWAY 15, WE DO NOT EXPECT THE GVN TO ACCEPT THAT AS FINAL, AND FIGHTING WILL CONTINUE, NEW AGREEMENT OR NO NEW AGREEMENT.

4. RELIABLE CANDEL SOURCE REPORTS THAT HIGH- RANKING CANDELS IN SAIGBE ARE NOW MENTIONING POSSIBILITY OF ALL CANDELS LEAVING VIET- NAM TOGETHER ON JULY 14 TO RETURN TO CANADA FOR NATIONAL WELCOME.

5. CONSUL REPORTS FROM TAY NINH THAT LAST NIGHT' S EXPECTED NVA/ VC ATTACK FAILED TO MATERIALIZE, THUS NO ONE NOW KNOWS IF OR WHEN AN ATTACK IS COMING, AND THE GUESSING GAME CONTINUES IN TAY NINH PROVINCE (AND THROUGHOUT MR 3 FOR THAT MATTER).

6. SAME SOURCE SAYS THAT ALL FOUR DELEGATIONS OF THE ICCS CU CHI SUB- REGIONAL TEAM ARE EXPECTED IN TAY NINH TODAY TO INVESTIGATE THE RECENT VIETNAMESE HELICOPTER CRASH NEAR BLACK VIRGIN MOUNTAIN. SIGNED WALKINSHAW UNQUOTE
WHITEHOUSE

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